THE NECESSITY Of Adhering To the Church of ENGLAND As by Law eſtabliſhed: OR The Duty of a Good Chriſtian, And particularly of PARENTS and MASTERS OF FAMILIES UNDER The Preſent Toleration.

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Theſe are they who ſeparate themſelves, ſenſual, having not the Spirit, Jude 19.

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THE PREFACE TO All in any Authority, ESPECIALLY To Parents and Masters of Families, IN THE ARCH-DEACONRY Of *ELY*.

I Have in the following Discourse shewed you the true way to Peace and Happiness upon Earth, and the certain means of Salvation in the World to come, if you will keep your selves and Families in the Communion of the Church of England, *and practise those Rules and Orders which She has required for your Publick Devotion and duties of Religion. And also made it evident what danger your Children and Servants are in of being ruined, if you doe not make use of that Power and Authority which God has given you over them, to see them duely Instructed in their Catechism, and brought up in a Religious conversation, and constant attendance at the Prayers and Sacraments of the Church. This I have often urged with great earnestness to your Ministers and Church-wardens, as they can very well testifie; and this if I had oppor-*

tunity, I ſhould deliver to your conſideration in your ſeveral Pariſhes, and I doubt not, but your Miniſters often put you in mind of the ſame; but my ſtrength and other occaſions not affording me leaſure to do that, I do ſend theſe Books, which you may Read and meditate upon at your ſpare times: And for your farther direction, beſides your Bible and Common-Prayer, I recommend to Your and Their ſerious peruſal, a Book called The whole Duty of Man, *where you have Sober and Pious diſcourſes about your particular Duties, and alſo uſefull directions about Prayer and other parts of Private Devotion. 'Tis not only Meat and Drink you are to take care of for your Families, as the Beaſts do for their young; but you are alſo to provide for their Souls which are the better part, and therefore ſee them educated in the true Faith, and Obedience to God, and made uſefull Inſtruments to promote the Peace and welfare of their Country. Schiſm and Hereſie will make them enemies to both, and to you to: It will teach them to be ſtubborn and ſelf-willed, Proud and Moroſe, Peeviſh and ill Natured, Falſe and Treacherous, and common diſturbers of the Church and State; all which inconveniences you will avoid if you bring them up in the conſtant Communion of the Church of* England; *for She only here teaches them the true old Way, and the plain Doctrines of the Catholick Church, and She is the only particular Church to whom by the Laws of God and Man you are bound to yield ſubmiſſion; and this has been fully made out not only againſt Papiſts, but all other Schiſmaticks and Diſſenters.*

This all Godfathers and Godmothers ought to take into their ſerious Conſideration, and where Parents are careleſs or erroneous, they ſhould uſe their endeavour

deavour to ſee their God-ſons and God-daughters brought up in the Profeſſion of that Faith into which they were Baptized: the neglect whereof, has made the command of the Church herein ſo much complained off and condemned by the Diſſenters, for elſe no Man in his wits can find fault with the Churches care in this matter. Since beſide the Parents, (who have a natural Obligation to breed up their Children in the fear of God) others are engaged to take care to ſee that done in Caſe the Parents dye or neglect it. Indeed it is every Chriſtians care in ſome meaſure, but that it might be more Orderly managed, 'tis layd upon ſome few to take it into their more eſpecial Charge, and uſually left amongſt Friends and Relations, which in Reaſon and Nature will be moſt carefull to ſee it done. To ſay it is much neglected, is no more then may be ſaid of too many Parents alſo: but the cuſtome is very good, and Sureties ought to be more carefull to perform the Truſt that the Church and Friends lay upon them, and to do what they can by themſelves or others, is all that is expected.

But it is not onely teaching them their Catechiſm is ſufficient, but you ought to ſee that they lead their Lives according to thoſe Pious Rules and Directions that the Church has taught them, and alſo carefully to reſtrain them, and to correct them for their Vices and Debauchery, ſuch as Swearing, Lying, Drunkenneſs, abſenting from the Church, and all other kind of Wickedneſs: and the better to prevent all theſe miſchiefs, carry them with you at all times to the Church, and take account of them what they have Learned and Obſerved from the Miniſters Sermons and Catechizing, and be oftentimes on Sundays, &c.

and

See Deut. 6. 7. *and other Leiſure times putting them in mind of their Duty.*

Deut. 11. 18, 19. *This the State as well as the Church does now more particularly require of you, during the Toleration; which is not meant to juſtifie Hereſie or Schiſm, or to warrant that they are in a ſafe condition that ſeparate from the Church, no more then* Jews *or* Hereticks *who have the like benefit: much leſs to encourage Ignorance and Profaneſs, but only to take off the Temporal Puniſhment which the Civil State did inflict. Now God does often defer his Judgments, to wait for our amendment, and Parents and Maſters do ſometimes think it convenient to wink at Offences in their Children and Servants; and ſo thô the State does not at preſent puniſh Diſſenters, yet it does ſo far diſapprove of their Wayes, that all the Obligations in Conſcience to Conform to the Church ſtill remain, both by the Laws of the Church and State alſo. Neither is any Man thought fit to be admitted to any Office or Place of Truſt that does not joyn in Communion with the Church of* England. *Beſides you muſt conſider, thô Puniſhments may be an outward means, yet 'tis voluntary Obedience makes good Chriſtians. If therefore you will diſcharge your Duty to God, to the Church and State, and the Obligation you owe to your Families, you muſt diligently obſerve theſe Directions, and take more particular Care at this time in the educating of your Children and Servants in the Communion of the Church, nay if you expect they ſhould receive any Benefit from any Publick employment in Church or State. And I pray God direct you and make you carefull herein; and I as I have opportunity ſhall ſometimes come and ſee, and enquire how well your*

Pariſh-Churches and Sacraments are frequented by thoſe who would be accounted hearty Friends and true Sons of the Church of England. *For if they are careleſs herein, how can we expect it from others who would rejoyce at our Deſtruction; and the* Papiſts *in the end will reap the greateſt advantage by our Diſorders. As you therefore love God, love your Country, love your Childrens Souls, keep them from Conventicles, and be carefull in training them up in the conſtant Communion of the Church of* England. *God does particularly commend* Abraham *becauſe he did* command his Children after him Gen. 18 19.
that they ſhould keep the way of the Lord. *And* Joſhua *does not only take care for himſelf, but ſays,* As for Me and my Houſe we will ſerve the Lord. Joſh. 24. 15.
And it is the Command of God in the New Teſtament, Epheſ. 6. 4. That you ſhould bring up your Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: *And what that is I have here ſet before you, to prevent your falling into the Errours and Confuſions of the times. And how can you better ſpend your Dayes then in promoting the Glory of God, and Peace and Love round about you, and obtaining happineſs for your Selves and Families to all Eternity? God be thanked the Pious Zeal of the Sons of the Church has had ſo good effect in the City of* London, *that daily Morning and Evening Prayers, Weekly and Monthly Communions, are Reverently and Devoutly celebrated and frequented in many Churches and Chappels. I hope their good example will ſtir up People in the Countrey to change their careleſs behaviour, to be reverent and conſtant in doing their Duty, and attending the Prayers and Sacraments of the Church.*

Cal-

Calvin. de neceſſ. Reform. Eccleſ.

LET them give us ſuch an Hierarchy, in which Biſhops have ſuch a preheminency, that they do not refuſe to be ſubject to Chriſt, wherein they depend upon him as their only Head, and are referred unto him; in which let them maintain Brotherly Charity one with another, and be united together with no other Bond than of his Truth: Then I will confeſs there is no Anathema *that they are not guilty of, if there be any ſuch, that do not obſerve it Reverently and with the higheſt Obedience.*

Calv. de vera Reformand. Ration.

That no Man may raiſe a Calumny againſt us, that we are too moroſe and froward concerning external things, and do ſo preciſely take away all Liberty; I do here teſtifie that I do not contend about Ceremonies, which ſerve for Order and Decency, or elſe are Simbols and Incitements of that Reverence which we pay to God.

Calv. Ep. 87. Protect. Angl.

I do highly approve that there ſhould be a certain Form of Prayer and Eccleſiaſtical Rites, from which it ſhould not be Lawfull for Paſtors themſelves to diſcede or vary. 1. That proviſion may be made for ſome Peoples ignorance and unskilfullneſs. 2. That the conſent of all Churches amongſt themſelves may more plainly appear. 3. That Order may be taken againſt the deſultory lightneſs of ſuch who delight in innovations. Thus there ought to be an eſtabliſhed Catechiſm, an eſtabliſhed Adminiſtration of Sacraments, and alſo a Publick Form of Prayer.

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THE Neceſsity of adhering TO The Church of ENGLAND as by Law eſtabliſhed, &c.

I Hope I have made it evident to you that I have a tender regard for the glory of God and the good of your Souls, by the great pains and the charge I was at to ſend you Books to ſtir you up, and direct you to the ſerious practice of the duty of Godlineſs; for tis not hearing all the Sermons and melting diſcourſes in the world can bring you to Heaven, unleſs you do truly *Love God, with all your heart, with all your ſoul, with all your mind, and with all your ſtrength*; which is not done by running now and then into a Conventicle, and ſighing and groaning at a paſſionate expreſſion of the Preacher, but by a conſtant and ſteady doing of your Duty. There are in the world many errours in opinion deſtructive of ſalvation, and there are more in practice. But of late years, ſince my coming to this Office, our Churches have been much more filled, and the Holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper better frequented, and the generality of

Deut. 6. 5. Matt. 22. 37.

the People seemed to be very well satisfied with the Doctrine and discipline of the Church of *England* as by Law established, and there need nothing but a hearty conformity to the rules and order of it, to make us all instruments of Gods glory here on earth, and happy to all eternity in the kingdom of Heaven. And that I might more effectually perswade you to live in all Christian obedience to the will of God, I thought some motives to the duty of Godliness, with short directions and prayers, would be a means to make you more ready and willing to lead a holy and Religious life. This was my real design and intention in sending that little Book amongst you, which if you would often and carefully read over, and observe the directions contained in it, you would find more solid comfort and satisfaction upon your death bed, or when you come to examine into the hopes you have of Salvation, then in all the passionate Sermons that ever you heard in a Conventicle, for then you would do your duty as God hath commanded you; whereas now most men content themselves with hearing only, and that not as they ought to doe neither, and so deceive their own selves, *Jam.* 1. 22.

Since the coming abroad of that little Book, when I thought I had little else to do but to call upon you to do your duty which you did already own and profess, I am now put upon another care by the change of affairs in the State, in order to the faithful discharge of my Office, that is to endeavour to recall some, and secure others in the unity and communion of the Church, now when you are ready to hear every new Man that sets up in a Conventicle, and read erroneous books to lead you to destruction, I hope you will read and consider what your Spiritual Governours (who have as great a concern for your good as They have a blind Zeal for your hurt) have to say for the truth, and your obedience to the Laws of the Gospel. And 'tis from the earnest desire I have of your peace and welfare, and the salvation of your Souls, that I do now again apply my self to you, and require you as you will answer it at the Day of judgement, when

I must give an account how I have discharged my duty towards you, seriously to consider how you shall answer this Charge which I now draw up against you, when the scoffs and jears of your Leaders, the allurements and threatnings of your companions, and of your friends in error will stand you in no stead, but you must each stand by your selves to be judged at the day of your death according to the word of God, which I now offer to your consideration.

The pretence of Conscience and being satisfied in their way without assurance from the Scriptures is an unsafe foundation.

I Know it is the temper of many of you to say we are satisfied, and you feel a great deal of comfort in the way you take to worship God, and have the testimony of your Conscience that you do act sincerely, and as you think, for the glory of God. But how easily may Men flatter and deceive themselves with such pretences? Do not Jews and Mahometans, all Hereticks and Schismaticks pretend the same? And are not many of them fully as Zealous and confident in their way and do they not as much condemn you in their thoughts as you can them? Nay those that killed the Apostles thought they did God service? So that to rely upon an inward satisfaction, the pretence of Conscience, without solid reason and foundation in Gods word, is the common mistake that deludes the greatest part of Mankind. If ever then you hope to appear with comfort before God, you must lay aside fancy and perswasion, and examine both your *Faith*, and your *Lives* according to the holy Scriptures. *If we or an Angel from Heaven* preach any *other Gospel* in part or in whole, or neglect any part of This, *let him be accursed.* Gal. 1. 8. When our Saviour began to preach, this was the Summ of his Doctrine, *repent and believe the*

Joh. 16. 2.

Gospel, Mar. 1. 15. When he sent his Apostles into the world, it was with this large Commission, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*, Mark 16. 15, 16. St *Paul* afterwards speaking of the Day of Judgment, Says, *God shall Judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel*, Rom. 2. 16. Again, *Christ Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his power.* The Gospel does not only contain promises but precepts, duties, as well as rewards. And therefore our Saviour when he is asked what a man should do to be saved, gives this answer, *If thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandments.* Again, *if ye love me keep my Commandments.* St *James* says, *whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all*, Jam. 2. 10. This contains all articles of our Creed, and all other Christian duties, we must not think then our Zeal for one duty, will excuse our neglect of another, we must not so much regard what we have done, but supply that we have not done. If through errour or mistake, any have lived in Schism, Heresie, Disobedience, or breach of any other command, he must repent and amend, for no confidence and self conceit can justifie us before God, while we live in neglect of our Duty.

Obedience to Governours and love and unity with our fellow Christians, necessary Duties of the Gospel.

AS our Saviour came into the World to reform the errours and vices of corrupt Nature, and teach Men the principles of Peace and Vertue, so in his Gospel he has given most severe commands of mutual love and obedience to his Bishops and Governours, because without it there would be nothing but ignorance and errour, quar-

rels and confuſion, and as it was in the Jewiſh Nation when there was no King in *Iſrael*, every one did what was right in his own eyes, ſo it will be in the Church where there are no Governours, or none that are hearkened to or regarded, every man will follow the devices of his own heart. Therefore when he founded his Church, the firſt thing he does is to appoint Governours with power not only to ſhut out of his Church, but out of Heaven, all thoſe that contemn their authority and will not be governed by them. Matt. 16. 18, 19. *Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdome of Heaven, whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on Earth ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on Earth ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* And though in this place it be promiſed to St *Peter*, to ſhew that each ſingle Biſhop had that power in his reſpective charge whilſt he lives in communion with and conformity to the Church, yet *Matt.* 18. it is ſaid, *whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth ſhall be bound in Heaven*; and when our Saviour actually beſtows this power, *John* 20. 23. he gives it equally to all the Apoſtles, *whoſe ſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted, and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain they are retained.* Again he ſays, *he that receiveth you receiveth me, he that rejecteth you rejecteth me, and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth him that ſent me.* And when he was going into Heaven, that he might fully provide for the order and government of his Church, he gives his Apoſtles authority over the whole World, to rule and to puniſh them, as well as to teach and comfort them; and this power is to laſt to the end of the World. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth, go ye therefore into all the World, make Diſciples all Nations, and lo I am with you alwayes unto the end of the World*, Matt. 28. The Apoſtle *Hebr.* 13. bids Chriſtians *remember them that have the Rule over you, who have ſpoken to you the word of God, whoſe faith follow*, v. 7. again, *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch for your Soals*, v. 17. And 'tis our Saviours expreſs command, *if he refuſe to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen*

and

And a Publican, and then he adds, to ſhew whom he means by the Church, that 'tis the Biſhops and Governours of his Church, *whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth ſhall be bound in Heaven*, Matt. 18. 17, 18. So that it is beyond all poſſible doubt that there are Biſhops and Governours ſent by Chriſt to continue to the end of the World, and there is a Church that muſt be hearkened unto, under peril of being ſhut out of the Kingdom of Heaven.

There muſt be a method and order obſerved in appointing the Biſhops and Governours of the Church, that Men may know whom they ought to obey, and whoſe puniſhments they ought to avoid.

ALL Men confeſs in general, that Chriſt has left Biſhops and Governours in his Church, but they are not all agreed who are thoſe who have this Authority committed to them. Now there muſt be ſome orderly method for our direction in this as well as other matters, or elſe the Authority will ſignifie nothing, and not attain that end for which it was appointed. For if every body be left to follow whom he pleaſe, then all cenſures and excommunications will come to nothing, aſſoon as Men are ſhut out from one Paſtor, they will run to another: If one will not comply with their humour, they will go to another that will, and ſo the Chriſtian ſociety, which ought to be the Pattern of order and unity, will be the moſt confuſed body in the World; every body will become his own Lord and Maſter, and will live and do as he liſt, but how oppoſite is this to that command of our Saviour? *If he refuſe to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man and a Publican*, and to that of the Apoſtle, *obey them that have the Rule over you*: when at this rate no Man has any other Ruler but his own peeviſh will.

Our Saviour therefore to prevent this confuſion, as he had Authority immediatly from God, ſo he gave his Apoſtles

poſtles full Commiſſion to ſend others with the like power of appointing new Biſhops to the end of the World, as faſt as any ſhould dye or the places become void. And to this purpoſe he ſays, *as my Father ſent me*, that is with power of ſending you, *ſo ſend I you*, with power of ſending others. *And lo, I am with you alwaies unto the end of the World*; accordingly we find *Paul* and *Barnabas* ordained by the appointment of the Holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 13. 2, 3. and they again when they had received this power goe about ordaining Biſhops in every Church where they were wanting, *Act.* 14. 23. and then *Act.* 20. the Apoſtle exhorts the Biſhops to *feed the Flock of Chriſt over whom the Holy Ghoſt had made them Biſhops.* Thus *Timothy* was ordained by S. *Paul*, and he had power to ordain others, but he is charged to *lay hands ſuddenly on no Man*, 1 Tim. 5. 22. *Titus* alſo was left in *Crete* to *ordain Elders and ſet in order the things that were wanting.* So that Chriſt he firſt ſent forth his Apoſtles, the Apoſtles they ordained and ſent forth Biſhops, they were to judge of their abilities and ſo to give them charge of Souls, and the People were to hearken to them and obey them as appointed by the Holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 20. and ſo other Prieſts and Officers that follow their orders and directions, 2 Cor. 7. 15. Joh. 20.

What method was obſerved in appointing Biſhops and Governours of the Church after the Apoſtles dayes.

'TIS not to be expected that the Names of all the ſeveral Perſons that were called to be Governours in the Church, and the places and bounds within which every Man was to exerciſe his Authority, ſhould be ſet down in Scripture, no more then the Names and Places of Kings and Princes and Civil Governours are. The common rules of prudence and order are enough to direct in this as well as the other matters, ſo that all things be done *decently and in order*, and to the *edification of the Church.* Now the Rules of decency and order do require that

Perſons

Perſons ſhould be appointed peaceably, and therefore no Man muſt thruſt himſelf into any Government till he be duely called and ſet apart for that Office, neither muſt any one uſurp anothers place and diſturb him in the quiet diſcharge of his duty. And then that all may be done to edification, tis fit the Perſons ſhould be able and well qualified to do their Office; ſo there muſt be Perſons who have power to appoint, and judgement to examine and diſcern the fitneſs of the Men who are to be called to ſo high a dignity as to be Teachers and Governours of the Church; how they are for life and converſation; that Magiſtrates and People can bear witneſs to, and are allowed to except againſt ill Men. But whether they are ſound in Faith, and indued with knowledge and underſtanding rightly to divide the word of God, and diſcharge their duty, that was ever the Office of the Biſhops to enquire, as alſo to ordain and appoint them, for they *muſt lay hands ſuddenly on no Man*, 1 Tim. 5. 22. but are to *commit this Authority to faithfull Men who are able to teach others alſo*, 2 Tim. 2. 2. again, *how ſhall they Preach except they be ſent*, Rom. 10. 15. *no Man taketh this honour unto himſelf but he that is called of God as was Aaron*, Heb. 5. 4. Now that was after a ſolemn and orderly manner, by Gods appointment he was legally conſecrated and ſet apart for that Office, *Exod.* 28. ſo were the Apoſtles, ſo were thoſe ſent abroad by the Apoſtles, and ſo Perſons were appointed in all ages of the Church, being firſt examined and tryed, and then Ordained and ſent forth by the Biſhops according to certain Canons, and the ſame order is obſerved at this day in all Churches that ſtand eſtabliſhed in any ſetled Government. And thô there be a diſpute in ſome places whether Biſhops and Prieſts be of the ſame order, and upon that ſuppoſition that every Prieſt is a Biſhop, and has Originally in him fullneſs of all Authority and Power, ſome do take it upon them to ordain thô meer Presbyters, yet it is upon that principle and ſuppoſition that a Presbyter is equal to a Biſhop, and has Authority from Chriſt to ordain others by virtue of his Office, and ſo ſtill they maintain that Men muſt be examined and appointed

pointed by Biſhops in a Regular manner, before they ought to be allowed to take upon them any Office of Preaching and Governing in the Church. And ſuppoſe a Biſhop and Presbyter were one Order, and a Presbyter had equal Authority originally to Ordain as well as Biſhops, which in the judgment of moſt Churches they have not; yet what an unreaſonable thing is it, to make uſe of a power of Ordination which was never owned and allowed for 1500 years in the Church, and which does create many doubts and diſputes and great confuſion in the Church, when they may have Ordination from the Biſhops, which all confeſs is ſound and valid, and thereby Men may avoid giving ſcandal to many Churches, and raiſing Scruples in the minds of People at home, which all charity does require good Chriſtians to prevent. Now this Succeſſion of Biſhops down from the Apoſtles time to our dayes, has run as clearly and as evidently as the Succeſſion of our Kings in *England* ſince *William* the Conquerour, ſtill one ſucceeding another, as any died or were removed, by Ordination and orderly appointment to his Charge. But yet farther, to keep peace and prevent confuſion, there muſt be ſome Canons or Rules, to retain every Man within the bounds of his duty, that one might not diſturb another, or undoe what another had done. Now about chuſing of Biſhops and about excommunicating Offenders; Biſhops may vary in their opinion, as it is known they often have done, one may be for this Man, and another for that, and unleſs there be ſome Rule to proceed by, there will be endleſs Quarrels and Diſputes; therefore the general Rule of Decency and Order muſt come in here, and we muſt conſider what direction the

Luther T. 4. p. 6, 7, 8. *Twenty years after his firſt appearing againſt the errors of the Church of* Rome.

The Apoſtles were called by Chriſt himſelf, the Apoſtles afterward called their Diſciples, as *Paul* called *Timothy* and *Titus*. Who afterward called the Biſhops, the Biſhops called their Succeſſors, and that *Call* continued to our times, and ſhall continue to the end of the World, and 'tis a mediate call, becauſe it is by Men, yet it is Divine; and this is the generall call all over the World after the Apoſtles, neither is it to be changed, but highly eſteemed, by reaſon of ſome fanaticall Men which deſpiſe it, and boaſt of another better call, whereby they ſay they are moved by the Spirit to teach. But ſuch impoſtors lye, they are moved by a Spirit indeed, but not by a good but a wicked Spirit--- Wherefore we muſt not run into another Man's charge, as the Devil does ſtir up his Miniſters to run where they are not called.

Scripture has given in this Case also. Now besides the Rule of common Prudence, that amongst Governours of all Societies, if they cannot otherwise compose any difference, they must sit down by the Authority of the major part: the Apostle tells us, *The Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets, for God is not the Author of Confusion but of Peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints*, 1 Cor. 14. much more then particular Bishops and Ministers ought to be subject to the rest of the Bishops. Then the general Rule of our Saviour is, *If he refuse to hear the Church, let him be unto Thee as an Heathen man and a Publican*, not only no longer an Officer, but not so much as a member of the Church.

Now all Bishops being Governours of the Church, and Successors of the Apostles, one as well as another has right to judge in Cases that concern the peace and welfare thereof, but it is impossible they can all meet or be consulted in ordinary Cases, and therefore as in the Civil state, for better Order and convenience in administration of Justice or preserving Peace, the World is divided into Kingdoms, Provinces, Counties, Cities, &c. And the respective Governours have the certain bounds and limits of their jurisdiction, and every one is to take care of all things within his own charge, and not to intermeddle or thrust himself into another Countrey or Province. So by direction from the Apostles, the Bishops did by mutual consent set out the bounds of every Man's jurisdiction, according to Cities and Provinces, and Civil States have confirmed the same in after Ages. Thus St *James* was Bishop of *Jerusalem*, St *Peter* at *Antioch*, St *Mark* at *Alexandria*, St *Andrew* at *Byzantium* now *Constantinople*, St *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, and *Titus* at *Crete*, &c. And after them other single Persons did succeed in their places, as we see it is at this Day, as one Bishop dyes another is chosen and Ordained to succeed in his Office. And as a City with the neighbouring Countries round it, did make one Bishops Diocess, so several Cities and their adjoyning Villages, did make one Province under one Arch Bishop. And all matters that did concern the Church were

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to be determined by the mutual consent of the Arch-Bishop, and of all or the major part of the Bishops of each Province, and this was the Order derived from the Apostles, confirmed by the general Councils, and generally observed through all Ages of the Church. As for the Authority of Patriarchs, and of late years the usurpation of the Pope, these are all incroachments upon the Church, and so are the Assemblies of Presbyters without or in opposition to their Bishops, much more (the root of all confusion) an independencie of every Preacher in each single Congregation, and deviations from the Antient and Apostolical Order. The standing and generall Law and Tradition was that which best suits with the rules of Decency and Order, that Christians should not be drawn from their own Country, should not be put to long and tedious journies, but have all Matters ended at home by the Arch-Bishop and Bishops of each Province amongst themselves, who best know the state and condition of the People committed to their charge, and are bound by interest as well as duty to consult the peace and welfare of their Dioceses. 'Tis needless to cite the Canons, the case is known to all Scholars that look into the antient Councils and Histories of the Church. And according to this universal Order of the Church, 'tis as easie for every one to know his own Spiritual Governours, as 'tis his Civil. Every Ones charge is allotted, and all within such bounds and limits belong to the Spiritual Government of the Bishop of the Dioceſs and his Assistants, and Minister of the Parish where he lives; and thus 'tis in all Kingdoms and Countries where the Christian Religion is professed, and this Order and Authority all sober Divines do own and acknowledge. But still it is with this limitation, provided they hold the Faith and Unity of the Catholick Church, and keep within the Rules of the Gospel. For all Bishops and others are members of Provincial Churches, and must be subject to the Rules and Order of the Province; and all Provinces are members of the Catholick Church, and must keep the unity of Faith of Christs mystical body. In rites and ceremonies, and private opinions

S. *Cypr.* Ep. 68. can. Apost. concil. Nicæ.

S. *Cyprian* Ep. 55. concil. *African.* can. 28.

See the 8 gen. Councils, and particular Councils confirmed by them.

in leſſer matters, particular Churches may differ one from another, and each Province or Nation may conſult and provide that which is beſt for themſelves, but then as to Faith and other neceſſary duties, that muſt be the ſame all over the World, and nothing muſt be done contrary to the Laws of Chriſtian Charity, and that mutual Love that we ought to have for all our Brethren in Chriſt; much leſs ought we to do any thing contrary to that duty we owe to our Spiritual Fathers that are ſet over us by the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* 20. and to the peace and ſettlement of the Catholick and our own particular Church or Pariſh. Now I cannot ſee what temptation any rational Man that wiſhes well to the promoting of the glory of God and advancement of true Religion, can have to change this antient Apoſtolical Order of a Synod of Biſhops governing according to the Rules of the Ancient Church, and with the aſſiſtance of their Presbyters, for a Synod of Presbyters only, according to the late Modell of M. *Calvin* invented at *Geneva*. Or what benefit the People would have by it who muſt ſtill be left to the Miniſter of their own Pariſh; neither would they find themſelves in a better but worſe condition. Much leſs ſhould make a Schiſm to inforce and bring in ſuch a novelty and invaſion upon their Spiritual Fathers and Brethren in Chriſt: or elſe to deſtroy all Church Government, as the Independants, Anabaptiſts and Quakers do, who ſet up Plow men and Thatchers inſtead of Biſhops and Prieſts.

All Perſons in this Nation are bound to joyn in Communion with their Biſhop of the Dioceſs and Miniſter of the Pariſh where they live, and the great ſin of thoſe that neglect this Duty.

I Have made it evident beyond all doubt that there are Spiritual Governours appointed by Chriſt to continue to the end of the World, and all Chriſtian People muſt be

be under the Authority and Jurisdiction of some or other of those Ministers, and that by direction of the Apostles, and constant Law of the generall Councils and tradition of all Christian Churches, and the Rules of Decency and Order, all Countries that own the Christian Religion, are generally divided into Provinces and Dioceses, &c. for the more peaceable management of all affairs. Things being thus settled, all those commands in Scripture that People ought to *hearken to the Church*; *obey them that have the Rule over them*; besides all those generall precepts, *Honour thy Father and Mother*, *To know them that are over you in the Lord and admonish you*, *to esteem them highly for their works sake*, *&c.* do oblige all People here in *England* to obey their several Bishops, and joyn in Communion with their respective Parishes, and those that do obstinately withdraw themselves from their obedience, do live in open contempt of Christ, and manifest violation of his Holy Gospel, which does require all Men to maintain Love and Charity especially with their Fathers and Governours, and to keep the peace and unity of the Church. All such Men that wilfully and obstinately continue in their Schism and disobedience, are not only shut out from the privileges and benefits of the Gospel, but bring upon themselves all the curses and punishments denounced against such grievous Sinners, for those that are disobedient to parents are reckoned up amongst the most heinous Offenders, *Rom.* 1. 30. *2 Tim.* 3. 2. Consider therefore how you will answer it to God in the dreadfull day, that do meerly neglect to joyn in the publick Service and Sacraments, and thereby disobey your Spiritual Fathers, and affront that Government which Christ has set in his Church for your good, and as the means to promote his Glory and your Salvation: 'Tis not Man but God that you reject, who gave us this Charge over your Souls, and you do despite to the Holy Spirit of grace, from whom we receive our Commission.

Besides the guilt of disobedience and contempt of Christs Ministers, you that assemble in Conventicles are guilty of Schism, which is a damning Sin, and a roots of all confusion.

AS nothing is more agreeable to the Nature of God then Love and Unity, so nothing is more odious to his most Holy being, then Schism and Division: for the nature of Love is to unite all things in Peace and Order, but the nature of Schism is to bring all things to misery and confusion. Whatsoever therefore Schismaticks may pretend of Zeal for the glory of God, their advancing Piety, and setting up Religion in greater purity, the Scripture calls such courses the works of the flesh, and pronounces the Persons that follow them Men of carnal affections. Those therefore that do not only withdraw from the obedience of their Lawfull Governours, but set up separate Assemblies under colour of purer worship, do plainly make a Schism in the Church, and rend the Body of Christ in pieces, and are marked out by the Holy Scriptures for the greatest enemies of God and true Religion. Our Saviour says he that shall be angry with his brother *without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment, and he that says unto him Racha*, that is empty, vain Fellow, and so slighting and bringing his Person into contempt, *shall be in danger of the Council; but whosoever shall say thou fool shall be in danger of Hell fire.* Now if it be so heinous a crime in the sight of God, to undervalue our Brother, what is it to despise our Spiritual Fathers, and contemn their godly commands and admonitions, moreover to tear and divide the Church of Christ, and instead of Love stir up animosities and contentions, strife and hatred, is too too evident, and from thence do generally follow Massacres, Rebellions, long and bloudy Wars, Murders, subversion of Kingdoms and States, destruction of Countries, and all the cruelties and miseries that Mankind are liable unto. As these things are manifest by experience, so Scripture tells us, *Jude* 18, 19. they spring from Schism;

Rom. 16.
Gal. 5.

Matt. 5. 22.

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There shall be mockers in the last times, who shall walk after their own ungodly lusts, these be they that separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit; whereas none glory more of the Spirit then these Separatists, whom the Apostle charges with carnal and ungodly Lusts. Again, *Rom.* 16. 17. *Mark those that cause Divisions and Offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have Learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly, and by good words and fair Speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* The Apostle pursues the same matter, *1 Cor.* 3. 3. *For ye are yet Carnal, for whereas there is among you Envying and Strife, and Divisions, are ye not Carnal and walk as Men? For while one saith I am Paul, and another I am Apollos, are ye not Carnall?* Again, *Galatians* 5. 20. reckoning up the works of the Flesh that shut Men out of Heaven, he says, *the works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these*, he puts down *Strife, Sedition, or Schism and Divisions, Heresies*, and then adds, v. 21. *They that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdome of God.* So than as Schism is an heinous Sin of its own nature, so it proceeds from a carnal mind, and that is the root of all other Evils and Disorders, *James* 4. 1. *From whence come Wars and Fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Lusts, that war in your members?* Lust breeds Division, and Division breeds War, and War brings all other evils with it, especially civil and homebred Wars, which spring from this root of Schism.

If none of these temporal evils follow upon Schism (which God grant they may not) yet Schism brings in Heresie, Ignorance and Prophanesse.

DID Men keep to the Rule of Gods word, and follow the interpretation of the Catholick Church, they would be secure from all danger of Heresie, ignorance and prophanesse, and would have a sure direction to lead them into the way of Salvation. For all

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the Schiſms, Hereſies and miſtakes that Men fall into, come by forſaking the guidance of the Church, and wreſting the Scripture to their own deſtruction, which St *Peter* ſays many of the unlearned and unſtable do. So that in this caſe, the Scripture may be compared to an Apothecaries ſhop full of all ſort of wholeſome Medicines, if rightly applyed with judgement and diſcretion, but ſuch as will prove deadly poyſon, if taken at adventure and miſimployed. Now our Saviour has given us the Scriptures for our direction, which with much ſtudy and pains, we may underſtand our ſelves for our own benefit and inſtruction: yet becauſe few Men who are engaged in worldly pleaſures and buſineſs, &c. do give themſelves ſo much leiſure as to read through and conſider the meaning of the Scriptures, ſo as to be able to ſatisfie themſelves in all doubts and ſcruples that cunning Hereticks raiſe to pervert them from the Truth. Therefore Chriſt Jeſus left Paſtors and Teachers, and founded a Church, to continue a conſtant Pillar and Monument, to expound to us all difficult and hard places, and to condemn and cenſure falſe interpretations, and ſtop the mouths of Seducers, from ſpreading abroad damnable Hereſies to the ruine of your Souls, and then that her Authority might not be deſpiſed, The Scripture ſays, if any one *refuſe to hear the Church, let him be unto Thee as an Heathen man and a Publican.* And for our better encouragement to hearken to her inſtruction, our Lord has promiſed that *the gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt it*, Matt. 16. And then to direct the unlearned and unſtable, he has ſet *Paſtors and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt; till we all come in the unity of Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God; unto a perfect Man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; that we may henceforth be no more Children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the ſleight of Men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, &c.* So that we do not take off from the fullneſs and ſufficiency of the Scriptures if rightly expounded and underſtood, but for the ſatisfaction of the un-

2 Pet. 3. 16.

Matt. 18.

Epheſ. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14.

unlearned and unſtable, which are the greateſt part of Mankind, we muſt remember, that God has kept up a Church and conſtant ſucceſſion of Biſhops and Miniſters in an Orderly way, to teach us the true meaning of his Word, and to keep up Diſcipline and Order, and ſo to preſerve us from the Hereſies and falſe Interpretations of Schiſmaticks that lead Men unto errour and deſtruction. While Men therefore keep within the City, they are in no danger of being a prey to the wild Beaſts, but if they run into a Wilderneſs, they may eaſily be deſtroyed by them. While they keep within the Ship they are ſecure from drowning, but if they forſake that, and commit themſelves to the unconſtant Waves, 'tis Ten Thouſand to One if they do not miſcarry. So while Men keep within the Communion of the Church, and follow the guidance of thoſe Paſtors which God has appointed to keep them ſteady, there is no danger of their Salvation; but if they forſake the Church, and run into Conventicles, they go out of Gods way, and ſo out of his protection, and are expoſed to all Hereſie and Confuſion. Pſal. 91. 11.

If their Teachers do not Sin wilfully and lead them into Hereſie, yet they may miſlead them through ignorance and unskilfullneſs.

WHO can tell how oft he offendeth, nay the Heart above all things is deceitfull, therefore 'tis an eaſie matter for Men that follow the guidance of their own underſtanding, and neglect the command of the Church, to be deluded by the Devil, who often appears as an Angel of Light, and yet is ſtill buſie to ſeek whom he may devour. Neither can they hope for the bleſſing of God, and depend upon the promiſe of his direction, when they go into by-Pathes and purſue their own devices. How many plain things may ſuch preſumptuous Men overlook? how often may they miſunderſtand ſome parts of Gods word which want more care and attention? Beſides,

who can be ſure that they come with all Languages and other helps to reading them, or take ſuch pains to read and compare all Texts, as not to be ignorant in many duties of great neceſſity to be obſerved? *And if the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch*: And no wonder if People periſh for want of viſion, when they wilfully run away from the inſtruction of the Church, and follow ſuch ignorant guides who had need to be taught the firſt Principles of humility and underſtanding. Thô therefore by good Words and fair Speeches they may deceive the hearts of the Simple, and may gather many excellent expreſſions out of the Holy Scriptures, yet 'tis a great raſhneſs and want of Judgment, for Men to truſt their Souls upon the skill and underſtanding of ſuch private Seducers; who by their ignorance may leave them without that ſufficient inſtruction which is neceſſary to Salvation.

Objections and Queſtions againſt Conformity anſwered.

BUT ſome will Object, that their ſetting up Conventicles in oppoſition to the Biſhops and Miniſters, is no more then what the Biſhops did in oppoſition to the Church of *Rome*, and therefore if they are Schiſmaticks now, the Biſhops were alſo, by Reforming the Church without the Authority of the Pope and Church of *Rome*.

I anſwer, By the Council of *Nice*, and all other general Councils, and the conſtant Order of the Catholick Church, all Provincial and National Churches have power to Govern themſelves, and reform any abuſes or errours that have crept into their Communion. And our Biſhops and Clergy did in an Orderly way lay aſide ſeveral errours that are maintained by the Church of *Rome*, but ſtill retain the Faith and unity of the Catholick Church, and we do alſo particularly blame the Roman Church for breaking the Order and rejecting the Traditions of the Primitive Fathers and general Councils, but do not at all break the Rule of Chriſtian Charity to the Church of *Rome*,

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or any other Church in the World; we leave them to Reform and Govern their own Churches, and do but uſe the ſame Liberty over our own Members, which Chriſt has given, and the Church has ever maintained, which we allow them to uſe over thoſe of their own Communion, for they ought to Reform thoſe abuſes as we have done.

Obj. But is there not a plain rent and diviſion made in the Church by this Reformation, and thoſe that were united before in One Communion, are broken into ſeveral parties.

Anſw. That there are and muſt be Hereſies and Schiſms in the Church, we are taught by the Holy Scriptures, *That they which are approved may be made manifeſt.* But we cannot anſwer for other Men, it is ſufficient we break Charity with no body; we pay all Love and friendſhip, and all that communion that one particular Church ought to pay to another, but we do not intermeddle with their private affairs, or diſturb and embroyl their Communion; and if the Church of *Rome*, and other Churches that hold with her, would keep the ſame temper that we have and ſtill do, we ſhould quickly ſee an end of all our Diviſions, for we differ from none but where they *differ from themſelves, and depart from the Primitive purity of thoſe Ancient and Apoſtolical Churches from whence they had their beginning.* And as for that Obedience and Conformity which we require of our own Members, it is no other and upon far eaſier Terms, then all Churches do require of thoſe that are under their reſpective Juriſdictions, ſo that we are neither the cauſe nor party in any Diviſion. Other Churches that break communion with us, deny that Chriſtian Charity that One Member of Chriſts Body ought to pay to another, and thoſe of our own Members that run into Conventicles, ſet up Altar againſt Altar, and divide themſelves from our Communion, go againſt the plain word of God, which requires them *to obey them that have the Rule over them,* againſt the conſtant Order of the Catholick Church and general Councils, and contrary to the Doctrine and Command of all other Churches in the World.

1 Cor. 11. 19.

Can. 30.

See my Evangel. and Cath. unity, &c.

Obj. But are there no Reaſons then for Men to refuſe the Communion of their particular Church and Biſhop, and muſt every private Chriſtian alwayes comply with their Governours, whatſoever they ſay or do.

Anſw. They muſt obey their particular Church, in all things Lawfull, which are in all things not contrary to the word of God and the Catholick Church.

Obj. But who ſhall be Judge in this Caſe.

Anſw. The ſenſe of the Catholick Church in Caſes of doubt is to be conſulted.

Obj. But is it not hard to know where ſhe may be conſulted, and how to underſtand her Senſe in any matter?

Iſa. 35. 8. 1 Tim. 3. 15. *Anſw.* God has promiſed that the way ſhall be ſo plain, *that a wayfaring Man though a Fool ſhall not err therein;* and for our direction tells us, the Church is *the Pillar and Ground of Truth.* And thereupon he has commanded us to hear and obey the Church, and there is no doubt it will be an eaſie matter to underſtand what her Senſe is, in all Caſes needfull for us to know.

Obj. But have not Biſhops and Scholars themſelves many diſputes about the Church, and about her Senſe in ſeveral points, and how then can People know the Sence of the Church?

Anſw. Men of ſome Judgment and little Reading, are willing to deſpiſe that Authority which is above their capacity, and Men of great Reading and little Judgment, do not know how to reconcile the ſeeming differences in the Church, but if you conſult your Biſhops and Miniſters, they will ſatisfie you concerning the Senſe of the Catholick Church in all parts of your duty. For ſince God has made it our duty to hear and obey the Churches, he will order matters ſo that all People that are willing to follow her direction, may be guided by it: for God does not reveal any thing to us that we cannot believe, nor command any thing which we cannot perform in the manner it is propoſed to us.

Queſt. What plain Rule will you give us to go by in this matter, for we would willingly know the Truth and hearken to the Church.

Anſw. Firſt

Answ. First in all Lawfull, and in most doubtfull matters, it is your duty to follow the command of your particular Church.

Quest. But what must I do in things that seem to me contrary to the Word of God, when such are commanded by my particular Church.

Answ. The second Rule then I would give you is, that if you think or are credibly told, you ought not to joyn with your particular Church in this or that Doctrine or practice, before you make a Schism, enquire of learned Men what was the Sense of the Primitive Fathers and generall Councils, and what is the generall opinion of other Churches, and most learned Divines about it, and be sure you have good Reason and Authority before you depart from your own Church in which you live and were Baptized.

Obj. This is the way to put me upon a tedious endless work, more then either I, or the Persons I consult will be ever able to go through.

Answ. No, no such matter, the Sense and Consent of the Scripture and of the Church is so clear in all points of duty that People are concerned to know and practice, and the Controversies are so few when rightly stated and understood, that want to be decided in Order to your doing your duty, that it will be no hard matter to receive full satisfaction; for they are either such that have been long agoe decided, or the Church is wholly silent about them, and there is no evidence of Scripture to oblige you to depart from your particular Church upon that account.

Now consider in how many matters all Churches are agreed, and the Controversies long agoe setled,

First, against the *Arrians* and *Socinians*, which are long agoe condemned for Hereticks, and the Three Creeds that expound the Catholick Faith, contrary to their perverse interpretations, are generally received by all Churches. So likewise the *Anabaptists* and *Quakers*, who deny Infant Baptism, are likewise condemned by all Churches, and 'tis the constant Doctrine of the Catholick Church and all Re-

Confess. August. See my enquiry into the means of a happy union.

Reformed Churches, that to ſeparate from their Lawfull Biſhops upon the account of their requiring of them to joyn in ſtated Forms of Prayer, and for enjoyning decent Ceremonies not contrary to the Word of God, and thereupon to ſet up Altar againſt Altar, and run into private meetings, is that Schiſm condemned in the Holy Scriptures. So that not only from the Holy Scriptures, but from the interpretation of the Church, it is moſt evident that they hold pernicious if not Damnable errours, and in theſe points it will be an eaſie matter for every body to find ſatisfaction, and to know the Churches Senſe concerning them. So that to joyn with ſuch Diſſenters, and to profeſs their Doctrines, is manifeſtly to oppoſe the Catholick Church, as well as the Word of God.

Obj. But if you put us to enquire into the Ancient ways, and conſult the Senſe of other Churches, and give us that Rule for our direction in matters of Controverſie; we fear you have a deſign to lead us back to the Church of *Rome*, for they talk much of the Church, and the old Religion, and tell us all the World is on their ſide.

Anſw. That is the great weakneſs of ſome to imagine ſo, and by their ſpeaking meanly of hearkning to the Authority of the Catholick Church, make many ſuſpect indeed that the Church of God has been altogether corrupted, and loſt; or elſe no where to be found for many Ages but in the Church of *Rome*. Whereas if you will inquire of your Biſhops, and Divines of the Church of *England*, they will tell you that the pretended Authority of the Pope and Church of *Rome*, is contrary to the generall Councils, rejected by the whole Church for the firſt Six Hundred Years and upwards, and condemned by the major part of the Biſhops and Chriſtian Churches, from the Apoſtles times, to this very day; nay the Church of *Rome* is the only Church by Name warned to take heed leaſt *ſhe be Cut off from the Body of Chriſt*, as the *Jews* were, *Rom.* 11. So that the Church of *Rome* is ſo far from being the Catholick Church, that ſhe is a very corrupt part of it; and thoſe of that Communion that amongſt us ſet up ſeparate Aſſemblies, do oppoſe the conſtant tradition of the

Catholick Church, the Canons of the generall Councils, and follow a private Spirit, and are as proper Schiſmaticks as any of our *Fanaticks* and *Diſſenters*.

Obj. But thoſe of the Church of *Rome* do not only charge us with Diſobedience to the Pope, but with Hereſie and falſe Doctrine, in rejecting many Articles of Faith and other Ancient practices of the Church.

Anſw. But if you will conſult your Biſhops and Miniſters, they will make it appear, that the Points we reject are ſo far from being Articles of Faith, and ancient practices, that they are Moddern errours and corruptions, not known to, or elſe condemned by the Primitive Church, and this we may ſee evidently made out by ſeverall late Writings and Diſputes.

Obj. I am glad to hear you ſay the Catholick Church does plainly condemn the Uſurpations and Errours of the Church of *Rome*, as well as the Scriptures, which ſeem plainly againſt them, and we think againſt many Orders of the Church of *England* alſo that are meer Humane inventions, if not old Popiſh Superſtitions, which we cannot Lawfully joyn withall, and therefore are forced to ſerve God in ſuch a Manner as we can, and which we think is better pleaſing to Him, thô in ſeparate Congregations.

Anſw. Humane Inventions, and Popiſh Superſtitions, are frightfull words indeed; but ſo you muſt remember, are Slanderers, Schiſmaticks, Hereticks, and diſobedient to Parents, &c. as all thoſe are that accuſe the Church, and cannot prove what they ſay.

Obj. But our Preachers have told us that theſe Orders of the Church are Popiſh, Anti-chriſtian, &c. and therefore our Conſciences would condemn us, if we ſhould comply with them.

Anſw. But will you run into ſo great Sins againſt the plain Word of God, becauſe your Preachers tell you ſo. I thought the Word of God had been your Rule, but now I perceive you follow your Preachers againſt the Word of God, and will not obey your Governours according to it.

Obj. We

Obj. We think our Preachers are Good and Holy Men, and Teach us the Truth.

Anſw. Why ſhould you not have as good an opinion of your Biſhops and Miniſters? But when the Preachers take upon them thus to draw you into Schiſm, Diſobedience, and teach you to have uncharitable thoughts of your Governours, and to condemn the Church and fellow Chriſtians; you ought to ſuſpect if not their honeſty, yet their Judgment and Diſcretion, for they are Men, and may be tranſported by Paſſion and Intereſt, or elſe through errour and miſtake, and lead you into heinous Sins. For why ſhould you think them wiſer and better then all other Divines.

Obj. But I hope ſtill they teach us right.

Anſw. But it is not enough to ſay you hope, you muſt be ſure the Governours of the Church are in the wrong, or elſe you are in a moſt miſerable condition to run your ſelves into ſo many Sins and dangers by ſeparating from them.

Obj. But my Conſcience tells me I am in the right.

Anſw. But 'tis not your Conſcience will excuſe you, unleſs you have ſome Command of God to build upon. Now turn your Bible over and over, you will not find any thing in the Scripture againſt any duty required by the Church.

Obj. But pray where have you any Command of God for your Common-Prayer and Ceremonies.

Anſw. We are commanded in Scripture to make Prayers and Supplications for all Men, and to ſee that all things be done Decently and in Order, and ſince the Words and Ceremonies are not determined in Scripture, 'tis better the Governours ſhould conſider and make Rules and Orders, then to leave it to every bodies Fancy, ſo that we have command in Scripture for what we do. But, pray, where have you any command of God for your irreverent Prayers and diſorder in Gods ſervice?

1 Tim. 2. 1.

Obj. Why do you call our Prayers and Service irreverent and diſorderly?

Anſw. Becauſe they are ſo, and cannot be generally otherwiſe; for when every Preacher is to follow his own heated

heated and Rambling fancy, and every Hearer is left to Sit, or Kneel, or Stand, or Lye along; to put on his Hat, or put it off: what can commonly be expected, but irreverence and diſorder.

Obj. As for theſe Modes, Geſtures and Poſtures, which you call Irreverent, we matter not them.

Anſw. But thô you matter them not, yet the Scripture does require all things ſhould be done *Decently and in Order*, and we find that our Saviour and his Apoſtles did kneel down and ſhew all outward Reverence, and therefore we think the Church of *England* has good reaſon to require People to imitate their examples in behaving themſelves Reverently and Orderly when they are in the Houſe of God, and not let their Service be more rude there, then when they are at their houſes at home; ſo that nothing is commanded in this kind, but what civility and good breeding would teach Men to obſerve, and for which we have the command of God, and the example of Chriſt and his Apoſtles and other Holy Men. 1 Cor. 14. 40.

Obj. Perhaps it would be better if People were more Reverent at their Meetings.

Anſw. But how can that be expected, when all your Prayers and the whole Performance is left to the Arbitrary pleaſure and diſcretion of every Preacher amongſt you, who are Men, and thoſe none of the ableſt neither, and may err and be ignorant.

Obj. But we think they Pray by the Spirit.

Anſw. What do you mean by Praying by the Spirit? do you mean that the Holy Ghoſt does put all thoſe words immediately into their Mouths, and ſo they uſe no other Prayers, but what are dictated by the Holy Ghoſt.

Obj. We do think ſo, and our Preachers keep us up in that belief.

Anſw. But how do they prove this? For if that be true, all their Prayers are as Divine and Infallible as the Word of God it ſelf. For the Holy Ghoſt is as Infallible now, as when he did guide the Apoſtles to write the Holy Scriptures. But it is evident to all the World, that theſe Prayers are often ſo far from being Divine, that they

ſometimes are ſuch as ſcarce become a ſober Man. Therefore you may ſee what Men your Preachers are that abuſe you in this manner, and cheat you with falſe ſtories; if your Preachers are dictated by any Spirit, 'tis generally by the Spirit of delusion; for it is not to be thought, that the Holy Ghoſt will work a Miracle at every Conventicle, to inſpire every diſſenting Preacher, when ordinary gifts are ſufficient not only for ſuch, but much more excellent Prayers: And any One that will but attend thoſe Meetings, and weigh their Prayers with Judgment, will find more of the errour and weakneſs of the Man, then of the leaſt evidence of the Holy Spirit.

Obj. But we have heard other Men Pray and Preach, but could never find ſo much ſatisfaction and comfort as we do from theſe Men.

Anſw. Perhaps their paſſionate way of ſpeaking, their Noiſe, with now and then an affected Sigh and Groan, may ſtir up a preſent paſſion in you, as a good Actor at a Play does, who can make the People cry and laugh when he will; I hope therefore you will not ſay, that the Actor is moved by the Spirit, and thoſe are all made Godly People, that are thus moved and affected as to burſt into Tears, ſo that if you Judge of the ſoundneſs of your Religion by ſuch outward Paſſions, I fear the Player when he ſets about it, will make you believe he is the moſt Sanctified Preacher. Setting then aſide this which is no argument of the working of the Holy Spirit, but an act of the Man, and all the efficacy is loſt in an hour or Two, aſſoon as you come into Company, or are taken up with buſineſs and other affairs: You muſt not therefore Judge of your Religion by a ſudden Paſſion, but by your ſound underſtanding, and ſteady performing all parts of your Duty.

Obj. But this cannot be a ſudden Paſſion only in me, but muſt be a real work of the Holy Spirit, becauſe I find a great change in my Life, I am grown more ſober, read and meditate upon Gods Word, and mind Religion more then I did before.

Anſw. But that is no Argument that you are in a ſafe

way, ſo long as you continue in Schiſm; for when the Devil did find he could no longer ruine your Soul by open prophaneſs, he now may tempt you to more ſecret Sins, to more Spiritual wickedneſs, which are as heinous in the ſight of God, and as dangerous to your Salvation.

Obj. We have ſatisfied our ſelves all along upon theſe accounts.

Anſw. But you ſee they are weak grounds to rely upon, for all this while thô you are Zealous for ſome, you may be wanting in many other neceſſary duties, and you are guilty of Schiſm, diſobedience to Parents, deſtroy all Diſcipline and Order in the Church, encourage Atheiſm and Prophaneſs, and endanger the ſafety both of Church and State, meerly upon fancies and humours, for I can call it no other, becauſe there is not One good thing that you can learn and obſerve there, that you cannot as well have and practice in the communion of the Church. Beſides you act againſt the Senſe of the Primitive Church, and all other Churches in the World.

Obj. If it be ſo, we are much miſtaken, and greatly abuſed by our Miniſters.

Anſw. It is certainly ſo, and while you follow ſuch blind and erring guides, no wonder if you fall into deſtruction.

Obj. We have been told by our Preachers, and therefore did verily believe that the Ancient Church were Papiſts, and when the Divines of the Church of *England* did talk to us of following the Doctrine and Government of the Ancient Church, we thought it was only with a deſign to prepare the way to bring us to Popery.

Anſw. Now I hope you are ſatisfied that the Church of *England* is no wayes inclining to Popery, but does endeavour to teach you your Duty, according to the Holy Scriptures, and further to confirm the Truth and ſoundneſs of their interpretation of Gods Word, by the Doctrine of the Primitive Church, and the generall Councils, and tradition of the Catholick Church. And this you may ſee if you read their late Writings, they do as heartily maintain againſt the Church of *Rome*, as they did before againſt the other *Diſſenters* and *Fanaticks*.

Obj. I am very well ſatisfied now that the Men of the Church of *England* are far from being Papiſts, but you tell me that all other Reformed Churches do approve of the Church of *England*, and are ready to joyn with her in communion, and condemn thoſe for Schiſmaticks that ſet up ſeparate Congregations.

Anſw. Yes I do ſo, and if you will but adviſe with your Biſhops and Miniſters, they will eaſily be able to prove it to your ſatisfaction. You may read much to this purpoſe in my *Evangelical and Catholick unity*, where you have the opinions of *Luther*, *Melanthon*, *Bucer* and *Calvin*, in their own words to this purpoſe.

Obj. Then therein I perceive our Teachers have greatly abuſed us alſo. Indeed I find many rational and ſober Men of the Church of *England*, and I believe there may be a great deal of Truth in what you ſay, but yet they are of ſuch a perſecuting ſpirit, that they will let no body live quietly by them that are not of their perſwaſion, which we think to be a very ill temper, not becoming the moderation of the Goſpel.

Anſw. It is a ſad thing that the Church of *England*, which is the moſt gentle and moderate, and does diſclaim all cruelty and hard uſage upon the account of Religion, ſhould now be accounted the greateſt Perſecutor, as I perceive ſhe is at this time. People ſtrangely forget themſelves, and the opinions and practices of their own Party, when they lay ſuch an accuſation upon the Church of *England*, which does diſown any power of temporal puniſhment.

Obj. But there were many Statutes that did inflict ſevere penalties upon Diſſenters.

Anſw. Theſe are made by the State for the ſecurity of the Government; for they finding Diſſenters generally enemies to the publick Peace, and endeavouring changes and alterations by Mutiny and Sedition, ſaw it neceſſary by Penal Laws to reſtrain them from growing too numerous, and to keep them within the bounds of their duty.

Obj. But does not the Church of *England* then allow of Penal Statutes.

Anſw. In

Anſw. In a moderate way ſhe does, to make Men hear and conſider, but not to undoe them.

Obj. But ſurely Men need not to be uſed like Children, they have diſcretion to mind their duty, without being ſtirred up by puniſhments.

Anſw. They ſhould have ſo, but 'tis plain that they have not, and therefore God Almighty has placed Governours and Officers to be a terrour to evil doers, and a praiſe and an honour to them that do well and mind their duty. Rom. 13.

Obj. Yes, if puniſhments were inflicted on evil doers, we ſhould like that well; but they puniſh Godly People becauſe they will not go againſt their Conſcience.

Anſw. Do you account then all the Idle, Lazy people that lye at home and ſleep, or elſe ſit drinking at Alehouſes in time of Divine Service, and will never ſo much as take pains to underſtand their Catechiſm, and bring their Children to be inſtructed in the Grounds of the Chriſtian Religion, Godly People. Now 'tis evident theſe idle and ignorant People, unleſs they be ſtirred up by puniſhment, will never give themſelves the trouble to underſtand and do their duty, and ſo will ruine their own and their Childrens Souls.

Obj. If you did puniſh only ſuch idle and lazy People that did live like Heathens, and require them and their Children to hear and do their duty, no ſober Man but muſt approve of ſuch Diſcipline, and will ſay ſuch People deſerve to be puniſhed. But you puniſh Godly People that do read and meditate upon the holy Scriptures, and take pains to know and do their duty, tho they do not conform to the Church of *England.*

Anſw. The Laws are made in generall for all that abſent themſelves from the publick Service, for elſe all idle People would excuſe themſelves under that pretence of being Diſſenters. Beſides many are Diſſenters not out of Conſcience, but out of Pride, Humour, and for temporal advantage; and ſo run into Hereſie, Schiſm, and Deſtruction. It is all the reaſon in the World that ſuch carnall affections ſhould be reſtrained, and Men obliged to hear

hear and conſider the ſober Inſtruction of the Church; and the deſign of all puniſhments is to that purpoſe, that Men might not neglect their duty out of humour and lazineſs, &c.

Obj. You will not allow then, that the Church of *England* is a perſecuting Church.

Anſw. No, by no means, no body can with any colour ſay that of Her; ſhe does adviſe all Magiſtrates to uſe that wholeſome Diſcipline which God has appointed, and which all Holy and Religious Magiſtrates have executed, to oblige People to hear and conſider. For as all Parents are bound to teach and correct their Children if they be diſorderly, ſo all Chriſtian Magiſtrates, as they are common Fathers of their Countrey, ought to ſee their Children inſtructed in the principles of true Religion, and have a right to puniſh their unruly and diſorderly Children: accordingly there are Laws for that purpoſe, which when executed as they ought to be, bring Peace and Holyneſs to a Nation; thô in the executing them there is great prudence and moderation to be uſed, which the Governours are to take into their Conſideration.

Obj. But why do you ſay the Church of *England* is the moſt moderate Church in the World.

Anſw. Becauſe ſhe like the true Mother, is for correcting and not deſtroying her diſorderly Children.

Obj. Surely thoſe that now cry up Toleration, and talk of liberty of Conſcience, when and where they had power, were not for putting to death and exterminating thoſe that did differ from them.

Anſw. Yes, you may read lamentable Stories of the cruelty of the Anabaptiſts in *Germany*, and I need not tell of the cruelties and Murders committed by others, who would be repreſenting the Church of *England* for a perſecuting Church. I ſhall not name particulars, inquire and you will eaſily ſatisfie your ſelves that the Church of *England* does but adviſe ſuch moderate diſcipline, as Fathers ought to exerciſe over their Children, when the Diſſenters are generally not ſatisfied but with blood and deſtruction.

Ob. I cannot say, but you speak a great deal of reason in the defence of the Church of *England*, and I perceive many good Men think it no harm to joyn with her upon occasion, but they think they may also goe and hear a good Sermon in a Meeting.

Answ. But is not that to set up a Schism, and plainly to make a fraction in the Church, and it is encouraging Children to think meanly of, and to despise their own Ministers, Parents, and Masters, for what is it but the very case that *S. Paul* blames in the *Corinthians*, that *one was for Paul, another for Apollos, another for Cephas*; for tho a Dissenter may Preach well, yet when he does it in opposition to the Church, without any call, and does draw People into parties, it is that Schism which is condemned by the Scripture, and will bring all those mischiefs that I have already spoken of; and does plainly teach People to despise their Governours, Ministers and fellow Christians.

Obj. But why do you say those Preachers have no call?

Answ. Because most of them have no Ordination, and if they had, they have no License and Authority from the Bishops and Governours; and so by the Law of Christ, and the constant Rule of the Church, they have no power to Preach, for *how shall they Preach except they be sent?* If they were Ordained, they ought not to thrust themselves into another Mans charge.

Obj. Tho they have no outward Call from the Church, yet they are sent by Jesus Christ.

Answ. How do you prove that.

Obj. Because we find them endued with excellent gifts, and Christ did not bestow such Talents to be hid in a napkin.

Answ. Gifts are no Argument that a Man has a Lawfull call, for a Heretick or a Schismatick may have Gifts, and use them to divide and destroy the Church. Therefore as none must Preach without a call, so if any that are called turn Heretick or Schismatick, he may be silenced again. *Tutus bis*, for besides gifts, there must be a sober and orderly Conversation, sound Profession, Obedience to the

Orders

Orders of the Church; and if this Method were not observed, and Men tied to be Peaceable and Quiet, and subject to their respective Governours, the Church would be the most confused Society in the World.

Obj. I confess Ministers ought to be quiet and peaceable Men, and they ought to promote Love and Unity.

Answ. But after this way of running into Conventicles, there can be neither Love nor Unity, nor holiness in the Church, for one Preacher will be setting up in opposition to another, and Sects and Divisions will daily increase: And you see by experience Schismaticks differ one from another, as they do from the Church, and then fall a censuring and condemning one another, as much as they did the Church; and thence proceed Hatred, Strife, endless Quarrels and Contentions, and Heresies; Ignorance and Profaneſs overspread the Nation, and all these mischiefs come upon us, because Men will not submit to that Order and Government that Christ has set in his Church, but after their own lusts *heap to themselves Teachers having itching Ears.* Now the Scripture says, Men that thus oppose the Peace and Order of the Church must have their mouths stopped, *Tit.* 1. 10, 11. But if they are not stopped, all good Christians ought to avoid having any thing to do with them, *Rom.* 16.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

Obj. Then I perceive you would take away the liberty of Conscience granted by the Act of Parliament.

Answ. The Act of Parliament is only to free you from the punishment that might be inflicted upon you by Law on your Body or Estate, and is equally extended to *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, and other Hereticks, and almost Persons of all Perswasions whatsoever, and to keep them quiet as to the State under their perverse humours; and therefore was never meant to lead you to the way of Salvation, or to warrant them to be good Christians; and my design is rightly to inform your Conscience, and perswade you not to use this liberty for a Cloak of maliciousness: and to take this opportunity to run from the truth, is the way to bring upon your selves everlasting destruction, as many do, that forsake the Church of *England.*

Obj. Do

Obj. Do you think then we are in such a dangerous condition?

Answ. It is not for me to pronounce Sentence upon any One as to the other World; but according to the Rules of Gods Word, and the constant Sense of the Catholick Church in all Ages, and of all particular Churches at this day, for Men to set up Altar against Altar, and separate from their lawfull Governours without just reason, is that Schism condemned by the Gospel; and that there is no reason to separate from the Church of *England*, I have sufficiently shewed by taking off all the Objections against her Communion. And consider what Mr *Calvin* says in this Case, who does also own Bishops, Liturgies and Symbolical Ceremonies, as ours are, no just Cause of separating from the Church, *viz. Instit. l.* 4. *c.* 1. *n.* 10.

I have set down the Preaching of the Word and Administration of the Sacraments, for the signs whereby to know the Church. For where the Preaching of the Gospel is reverently heard, and the Sacraments are not neglected, there for thus much is a certain face of a true Church, and it is lawfull for no Man, without punishment, to despise her Authority, reject her Admonitions, be refractory against her Counsels, or mock at her Corrections, much less may he separate from her and break her unity. For our Lord does so highly esteem the Communion of his Church, that he does reckon him for a Renegado and deserter of Religion, that does obstinately separate from any Christian Society, that does hold the true Ministry of the Word and Sacraments; from whence it does follow, that to depart from the Church, is to deny God and Christ: but how much the more ought we to take heed of such a wicked Schism; for while we go about as much as in us lyes to destroy the Truth of God, we deserve that God should thunder against us with the greatest forces of his Wrath, to break us in pieces.

Mr *Baxter's* Apology pag. 8. I know how unable the Separatists were to answer the many Arguments of the Famous *Arth. Hildersham*, *J. Paget*, *W. Bradshaw*, *Brightman*, *John Ball*, and other old *Nonconformists*, for the lawfulness of Communicating with our Parish-Churches, in the Sacraments and the Liturgy. I was exceedingly moved against Separation (truely so called) by considering. 1. How contrary it is to the Principle of Christian-love. 2. And how directly and certainly pernicious to the interest of the cause of Christ, and his Church, and of the Souls of Men, and how powerful a means it is to kill that little Love that is left in the World —— 4. I was greatly moved in thinking of the State of most Churches in the World; if I travelled into *Abassa*, *Armenia*, *Russia*, for among the *Greek* Churches, I durst not deny to hold communion with them. When I go to God in Prayer, I dare not go in a separate capacity, but as a Member of the Universal Church, nor would I part with my

ſhare in the Common Prayers of all the Churches, for all the World, and having peruſed all the Forreign and Ancient Liturgies extant in *Bibliotheca Patrum*, I doubt not but our own is incomparably better then any that is there.

If ſome Men of better underſtanding by their diligence get to a knowledge of the principal parts of their Duty, yet the generality of People, Children and Servants, will be expoſed to all Ignorance, Errour and Profaneſs.

IN the conſtitution of the Church, the very Order of the Service, and the ſolemn times ſet apart to bleſs God for the particular diſpenſations of the Goſpel, ſuch as the Incarnation of our Lord, at the Feaſt of *Annunciation*, commonly called our *Lady-day*, his Birth at *Chriſtmas*, and ſo his *Paſſion*, *Reſurrection*, *Aſcenſion*, ſending down the Holy Ghoſt, the Feaſt of the Holy *Trinity*, with other particular Seaſons, are a ſtanding Catechiſm, and with a little help will eaſily bring even Children to underſtand and remember all parts of their Duty, and for their fuller inſtruction and admonition, the Miniſter is to Catechiſe in the Afternoons, and to teach thoſe that are ignorant of theſe things, and to put all others in mind to think upon and obſerve what they do already underſtand. So that Perſons that live in the Obedience of the Church, muſt be ſtupidly careleſs of themſelves, if they want any thing neceſſary for their edification in Faith and Love, and finally to attain Salvation; and if any generally are ignorant of theſe things, they are ſuch who run away from their Governours, and either through ſloth or faction, would not give themſelves the trouble to hear and receive the ſober advice of their Miniſters, and commands of the Church. Then under the Churches diſcipline, the admonition of the Biſhops, the reproof of their Miniſter, good Neighbours and fellow Chriſtians, did reform many of theſe abuſes, and ſtir up others to a diligent attendance upon the publick Service. But now all ſorts of temporal puniſhments are in a manner ſuſpended, if you by running into Con-

ven-

venticles, teach your Children and Servants, your Neighbours and Acquaintance, to despise the Authority of their Bishops and Ministers, and all the Spiritual discipline of the Church, you will be a means to encourage Ignorance and Profaneſs, and in a ſhort time our People will fall into Atheiſm and Infidelity. For many from your example, taught to contemn the reproofs and cenſures of their Governours, will not only neglect the Communion of the Church, but all ſort of exerciſe of Religion, and ſo turn *Pagans*, if not live altogether like brute Beaſts. Others that have as yet ſome ſparks of the Senſe of Religion in generall left in them, yet running up and down from Place to Place, from one Sect to another, will be far from receiving that firm and ſetled underſtanding of the Grounds and Principles of Religion, which is neceſſary to keep them ſteady in their Duty, and to build them up to an Holy and Heavenly converſation. So that you that withdraw your ſelves from the Communion of your Biſhops and Miniſters of the Church of *England*, beſides the great Sins of Diſobedience, Schiſm, and contempt of the Church, and the danger you run of hereſie and damnable errour, you do by your pernicious example expoſe your Children and Servants, and multitudes of your fellow Subjects to Ignorance, Profaneſs, Infidelity, Atheiſm, and ſo inſtead of advancing pure Religion, you will bring the greateſt part to no Religion at all: and theſe things we could in a great meaſure prevent, if you by running into Conventicles, and deſpiſing the directions of your Governours, did not give them occaſion, and encourage them to run away from the ſober inſtruction of the Church.

Let me therefore in the Name of God, (and as I have the generall care and charge of your Souls, and ſhall be ready to give any aſſiſtance and direction you ſtand in need of in your paſſage to Heaven) prevail upon you to take theſe things into your ſerious conſideration. Religion is not a politick Engine to be uſed at pleaſure, only to ſerve Mens turns upon occaſion, and gratifie their humour, and keep up the intereſt of a party, but 'tis the revealed and unchangeable Will of God concerning our Salva-

tion, and therefore muſt in all things be carefully perfor-
med according to the Rules of his Holy Word; neither
muſt we have an eye only to this or that particular Duty,
but have regard to all his Commandments: Now Satan does
often appear with ſtrong deluſions like an Angel of light,
and his inſtruments do with good words and fair Speeches
deceive the hearts of the Simple, and put many cheats and
fallacies upon unwarie Souls, to bring them into deſtruction.
But there are ſcarce any more weak and manifeſt, then
thoſe that you have been hitherto abuſed withall, and
many of them now evidently falſe by your own confeſſion; as
that we were all *Papiſts*, we did worſhip Stocks and Stones,
were only morall Men, without any dependance upon the
Grace of God, and the direction of his Holy Spirit.
And now theſe ſlanders are fully confuted, they turn to
other devices, altogether as groundleſs and unreaſonable;
as that 'tis indifferent what manner of Governours Men
live under in matters of Religion, ſo they live Holy lives,
and that they in ſeparating from the Church of *England*,
doe no more then ſhe did in Reforming from the Church
of *Rome*; as if it were the ſame to have a publick Service
that they do underſtand, with having a publick Service
they do not, to have the uſe of their Bibles or not to have
them, to worſhip Images, pray to Saints and Angels, be
content with half the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, or
not, when our Lord requires the whole. To omit many
other errours. And not only our Biſhops and Clergy, but
Princes and Parliaments did all agree to Reform theſe
abuſes, and ſettle our Church upon the ſure foundations of
Truth and Holineſs, according to the Word of God, and
conſtant Law and Order of the Catholick Church; and
there is not one duty of Piety to God, Charity to your
Neighbour, and Obedience to the Catholick Church, but
you may better practice in the Church of *England*, then
in any other Society or Communion. Deal ſeriouſly with
your own Souls and Conſciences, What can you learn and
practice in any Meeting, that you cannot as well obſerve and
be taught in the Church? Will you then merely for fan-
cies and Humours expoſe your own Souls, your Wifes

and Children, and the whole Nation to the danger of all Hereſies and Schiſms, and bring ſo great a guilt and diſtraction upon your ſelves and Country? If you are offended at the evil Lives of ſome of our Members, do you come in and joyn with us, and give them better example; and by your Holy and Orderly converſation ſtrengthen our hands to their ſhame and amendment, that we may all follow Peace and Holineſs in this World, and Reign with Joy and Glory in the World to come; but if you ſtill continue obſtinate in your Separation, conſider how you will acquit your ſelves at the great Day, of the guilt of Schiſm, Contempt of Chriſt and his Miniſters, Diſobedience to Parents, and from being the ſad occaſion of thoſe Hereſies, Profaneſs and Confuſion that have been brought into the Church of God: and that I do not ſay this as my own opinion only, but that which was the fear and apprehenſion of Queen *Elizabeth*, and the Parliament in the beginning of our Reformation, we may learn from their Words, wherein they did as it were by Propheſie, foretel the miſeries which ſince fell upon our Nation, and were chiefly brought upon us by this Sin of Schiſm, and neglect of reforming to the Church.

All and every Perſon and Perſons inhabiting within this Realm or any other of the Queens Majeſties Dominions, ſhall diligently and faithfully, having no lawfull or reaſonable excuſe to be abſent, endeavour themſelves to reſort to their Parish Church or Chapell accuſtomed, or upon reaſonable let thereof, to ſome uſual place, where Common Prayer and ſuch Service of God ſhall be uſed in ſuch time of let, upon every Sunday or other days Ordained and uſed to be kept as Holy-days, and then and there to abide Orderly and Decently during the time of the Common Prayer, Preachings or other Service of God there to be uſed and miniſtred, upon pain of puniſhment by the cenſures of the Church——

1 *Eliz.* 1.

And for the due execution hereof, The Queens moſt excellent Majeſty, the Lords Temporal, and all the Commons in this Parliament now aſſembled, do in Gods Name earneſtly require, and charge all the Arch-Biſhops, Biſhops and other Ordinaries, that they ſhall endeavour themſelves to the uttermoſt of their knowledges that the due and true execution hereof may be had throughout their Dioceſes and Charges, as they will anſwer before God for ſuch evils and plagues, wherewith Almighty God may juſtly puniſh his People for neglecting this good and wholeſome Law.

The

Tho the outward Penalty be suspended, in some Cases, yet the Duty still remains, and the reason is the same, and we may mind Men of it. But what miseries and calamities our Nation has suffered by the neglect hereof since that time, need not be told the Men of this generation; I wish the hinderers of the due execution of this Law formerly, that are left alive, would in time consider and repent.

A Postscript to the CLERGY.

Reverend Brethren in Christ,

THE great business of our Lives, as Clergy Men is to inculcate and Rule our several Charges; that we may be able to say with the great Apostle, *I am pure from the Blood of all Men, for I have not shunned to declare to you all the whole Counsel of God*; that will require a great deal of Care and Diligence, but it is a Duty ought to be performed with our utmost endeavour, and fatal will it be if any should perish through the Ministers neglect.

Acts 20. 26, 27.

'Tis true the Spiritual power Christ has given his Church is little understood, and all her Authority is much slighted by too many in this Age, and the many Divisions and Schisms will encrease this difficulty: therefore 'tis more necessary it should be vigorously asserted and maintained, and the dangers and mischiefs that are like to follow upon it should be discovered and laid open, while in some measure they may be prevented. For tho it may seem plausible to some, and that there can be no harm now and then to hear a good Sermon at a Conventicle, as well as in the Church; yet in the end it will prove fatall to Religion, to say no more, what other evils will follow from such a practice, if once espoused by Men of interest and Quality, as God be thanked commonly as yet it is not. These things I have represented to you my Brethren at our Visitation, and doubt not but you have often urged the same to your several Charges, but because things Read

may

may be better weighed and considered, and I can with the same pains inform all as a few; I have sent these Papers, the good effect whereof will in a great measure depend upon your further Discourses and Management, in more fully enlarging upon and explaining the several particulars in your Catechising and private discourses, and if you can throughly convince your Parishioners, that they ought to forsake all other Meetings, and joyn in the Communion of the Church of *England*, and that they are bound to reverence you as Christs Officers established by the Catholick Church, as really you are, while you are regularly Constituted, and faithfully discharge your Places, they will easily hearken to you in all other Duties. Many perhaps will read these Papers, that will not look into a Church. But the design of this Discourse is not only to shew them the necessity of adhering to the outward Communion of the Church, but to let them see how much Religion in generall, and the publick Peace and quiet of Conscience is concerned in it, if they will goe upon good grounds; also that either through Ignorance or Errour they are like to loose the main Principles of the Gospel. My first desire therefore is, that you would take care in Expounding to your Flock those Articles, Rubricks, and Canons which concern Faith, Hope and Charity, and the essential Duties of the Gospel, and then upon occasion, not always dwelling upon Matters of Discipline, let them know, how usefull and necessary these things are to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, and in righteousness of Life, and be sure not to neglect those Laws that concern Catechizing and Expounding the same, for the instruction of Old and Young according to their several Capacities; and I desire you to consider what weight this Church has layd upon Catechizing, as well before as since the Reformation, and see the fundamental Principles seriously imprinted upon the Peoples minds, which you find * *Linwood Provincial. lib. 1. de officio Archipresbyteri, c. Ignorantiae &c.* And then stir them up to shew their Faith by their good works, in frequenting the Publick Prayers and Sacraments, and leading Holy Lives answerable to their Profession.

For

* *Quilibet sacerdos plebi præsidens quater in anno vel per se vel per alium exponat populo vulgariter absq; cujulibet subtilitatis textura Phantastica, quatuordecem fidei articulos, decem mandata decalogi, duo precepta evangelii, viz. geminæ charitatis, septem opera misericordiæ, septem peccata mortalia cum sua progenie, septem virtutes principales ac---gratiæ Sacramenta. Idem. de officio Archidiacon. cap. Ut Archid.*

Ut Archidiaconi------ quotiens Presbyteros invenerint------ statutis temporibus populo minime [hæc omnia] *prædicasse seu publicasse, totiens eos arguant: & pœna canonica castigando supplere compellant quæ temerè omiserunt.*

For if they really are, or desire to be good Christians, and Members of the Church of *England*, they must not only rely upon talking, and outward Profession, but sincerely observe the Rules and Orders of the Church, both by themselves and Families.

There has been a great outcry made against many Pious and Learned Divines, under the Name of High Church-Men, &c. and others have been magnified as more rational and moderate Men, but all that I could see the Church-Men aimed at was, *earnestly to contend for the Faith once* Jud. 3. *delivered to the Saints*, in opposition to Infidels and Heretics, and so to preserve the Purity of the Gospel, and to keep a Decency and Reverence in the worship of God: and I appeal to the experience of the Nation, where the Publick Prayers and Sacraments are more devoutly offered up and frequented, and what Congregations shew the most Religious behaviour in the Church? And since 'tis the Gospel by which we must be judged at the last day, there is no other way, to appear with hope before God, then having *your Conversation as becomes the Gospel of Christ*. Philip. 1. 27. Now all these Orders of the Church which are contended for, are only applying the Rules of Gods Word, as may most tend to edification, and to direct Men in the particular circumstances of each Ones Duty, and without some such Orders and observance of them, I do not see how Men can keep up a publick Worship of God without being a Scandal to Infidels and Sober Christians, and why the Ancient Rules and Customs of the Church should be thought an offence, I cannot understand, nor how the taking them away can advance Piety in the Nation.

These Books I commit to your Hands, and desire you to lend them about in your several Parishes, and make the best use of them you can, for the benefit of those that you have any hopes will be the better by them. And put them in mind to read and observe the Directions in the former Book.

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FINIS